

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph that was added between the title and the first line of the text in the Amendment filed July 29, 2005, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The invention claimed herein is the result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement between Hitachi Plant Engineering & Construction Co., Ltd. and Shin-Nakamura Chemical Co., Ltd. ~~The joint research agreement was executed on May 31, 2000. A concise statement of the field of the invention claimed herein is microorganism-immobilized carriers.~~